

Iowa Economic Update

May 27, 2015

Summary

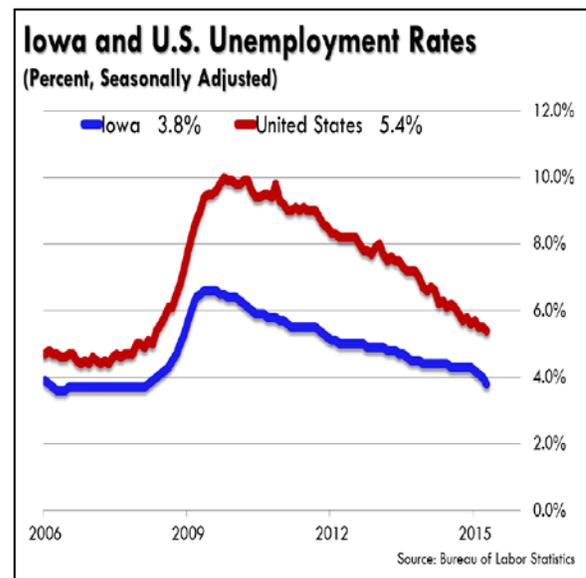
Nonfarm payroll employment in Iowa declined by 1,700 jobs and the unemployment rate fell to 3.8 percent in April according to data released by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS).

Iowa Unemployment Rate

During April, the unemployment rate in Iowa declined by 0.2 percentage point to 3.8 percent. The number of people counted as unemployed fell by 2,524 in April to 65,486, while the labor force fell by 1,888 to 1,713,221. Among the 50 states and the District of Columbia, 6 posted lower unemployment rates for the month than Iowa. A year earlier, the unemployment rate in Iowa stood at 4.4 percent.

The 10 year peak for the unemployment rate in Iowa was 6.6 percent in August 2009. The series high for the unemployment rate in Iowa occurred in January 1983 when the unemployment rate reached 9.1 percent. The 10 year low for the unemployment rate in Iowa was 3.6 percent in June 2006. The series low for the unemployment rate in Iowa occurred in March 2000 when the unemployment rate reached 2.4 percent. BLS began publishing the state unemployment rate series in 1976.

The national unemployment rate was unchanged at 5.4 percent in April. April's unemployment rate was 0.8 percentage point lower than a year earlier when the rate stood at 6.2 percent. The ten year high for the national unemployment rate was 10.0 percent in October 2009. The ten year low was 4.4 percent in May 2007.



Iowa Payroll Employment

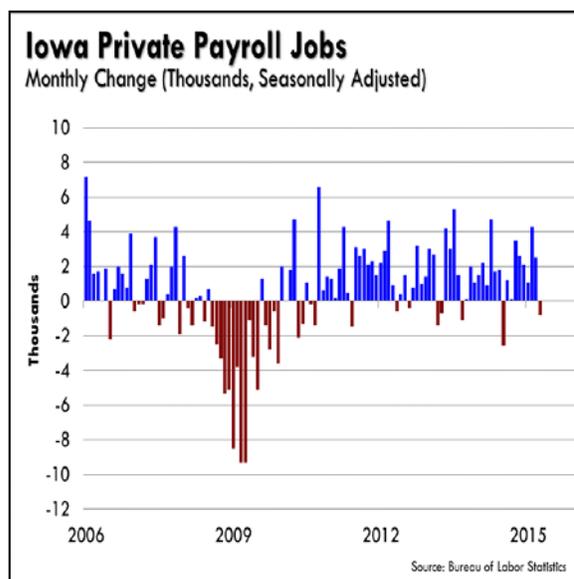
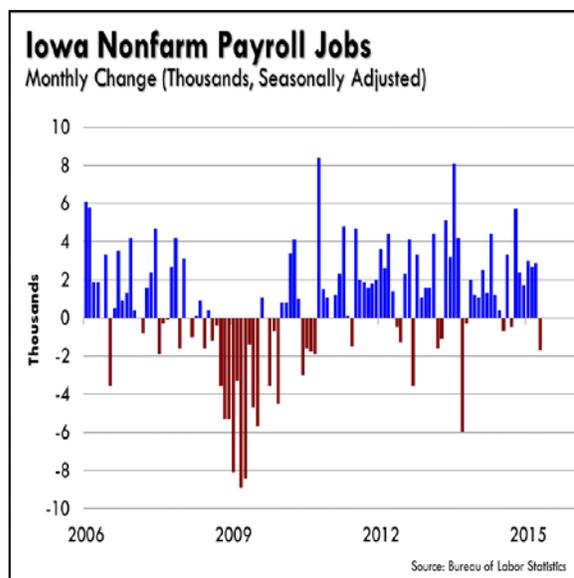
Iowa nonfarm payrolls declined by 1,700 jobs, or 0.11 percent, on a seasonally adjusted basis during April. In the prior month, nonfarm payrolls increased by 2,900. Over the past 12 months nonfarm payrolls in Iowa increased by 20,400, or 1.32 percent. Iowa nonfarm payroll employment has increased in 9 of the past 12 months.

Nationally nonfarm payrolls increased by 223,000 jobs in April, or 0.16 percent. Over the 12 month period ending in April 2015, nonfarm payrolls grew by 2,982,000 jobs, or 2.15 percent. Iowa ranks 31st among the 50 states and the District of Columbia for percentage gain in nonfarm payroll employment over the past 12 months.

During April, Iowa private sector payrolls declined by 800, or 0.06 percent. Private sector payrolls increased by 2,500 jobs in the prior month. Over the past 12 months, private sector payrolls in Iowa increased by 17,500, or 1.36 percent. Iowa private sector payroll employment has increased in 10 of the past 12 months.

Nationally, private sector payroll jobs increased by 213,000 in April, or 0.18 percent. Over the past 12 months, the nation's economy has added 2,918,000 private sector payroll jobs, an increase of 2.50 percent. Iowa ranks 35th among the 50 states and the District of Columbia for percentage gain in private sector payroll employment over the past 12 months.

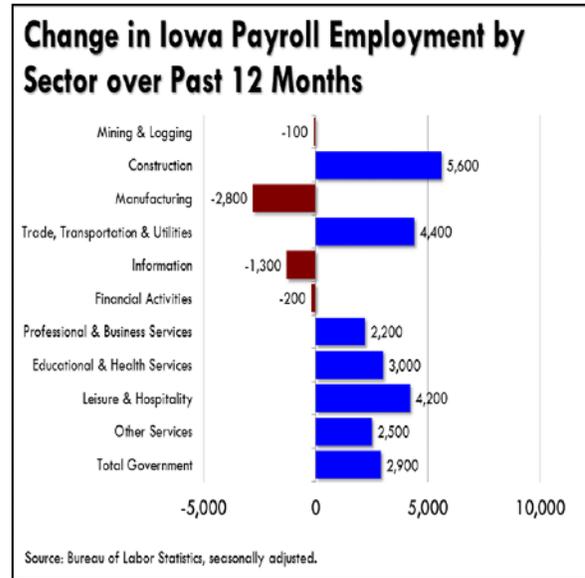
During April, total government payroll employment in Iowa declined by 900, or 0.35 percent. Federal government payroll employment increased by 100, or 0.57 percent. State government payroll employment declined by 100, or 0.15 percent, while local government payroll employment declined by 900, or 0.52 percent.



Over the past year, total government payroll employment increased by 2,900, or 1.14 percent. State government payroll employment increased by 1,900, or 2.86 percent. Local government payroll employment increased by 900, or 0.53 percent.

The best performing sectors on a seasonally adjusted basis during April were Construction (+2,400) and Other Services (+1,600). The poorest performing sectors during the month were Manufacturing (-3,200) and Trade, Transportation & Utilities (-1,000).

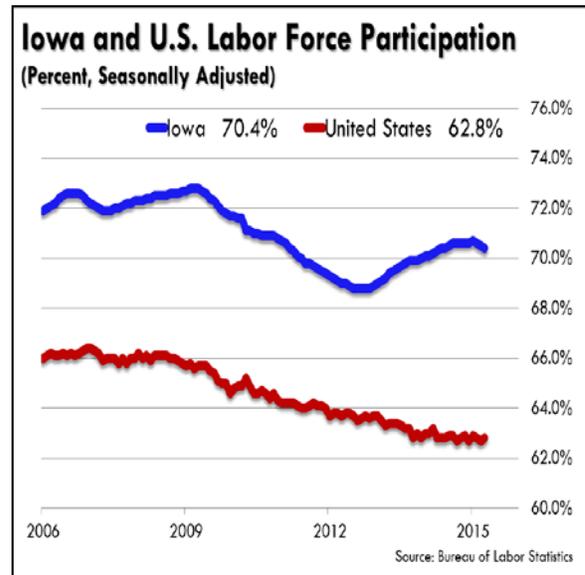
The best performing sectors during the last twelve months were Construction (+5,600) and Trade, Transportation & Utilities (+4,400). The poorest performing sectors for the year were Manufacturing (-2,800) and Information (-1,300).



Other Iowa Labor Force Statistics

The labor force participation rate in Iowa declined to 70.4 percent in April from 70.5 percent the prior month. At 70.4 percent, Iowa has one of the five highest labor force participation rates in the nation. The labor force participation rate in Iowa is unchanged from a year earlier. The labor force participation rate is the percentage of the civilian noninstitutionalized population age 16 and older who are employed or actively looking for work.

The 10 year high for the labor force participation rate in Iowa was 72.8 percent in April 2009. The series high for the labor force participation rate in Iowa occurred in August 1996 when the labor force participation rate hit 73.6 percent. The 10 year low for the labor force participation rate was 68.8 percent in November 2012. The series low for the labor force participation rate occurred in January 1976 when the labor force participation rate hit 63.8 percent.



The national labor force participation rate rose by 0.1 percentage point to 62.8 percent in April. That rate is the same as a year earlier.

The employment-to-population ratio, or the percentage of the Iowa civilian noninstitutionalized population 16 years and older counted as employed, was unchanged at 67.7 percent in April. At 67.7 percent, Iowa has one of the five highest employment-to-population ratios in the nation. The employment-to-population ratio in Iowa is 0.5 percentage point higher than a year earlier.

The 10 year high for the employment-to-population ratio in Iowa was 69.9 percent in October 2006. The series high for the employment-to-population ratio in Iowa occurred in August 1996 when the employment-to-population ratio hit 71.0 percent. The 10 year low for the employment-to-population ratio was 65.4 percent in November 2012. The series low for the employment-to-population ratio occurred in April 1983 when the employment-to-population ratio hit 59.9 percent.

The national employment-to-population ratio was unchanged at 59.3 percent in April. At 59.3 percent, the national employment-to-population ratio is still below the level of 59.4 percent when the recession ended in June 2009. The all-time high for the employment-to-population ratio was 64.7 percent in April 2000. The 10 year high for the employment-to-population ratio was 63.4 percent in December 2006. The recent low occurred in October 2013 when the employment-to-population ratio dipped to 58.2 percent. The last time the employment-to-population posted a reading lower than 58.2 percent was July 1983.

State employment and unemployment data for May is scheduled for release on Friday, June 19. The national employment situation report for April is scheduled for release on Friday, June 5.

